

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06332 311411Z

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SUBJECT: USSR OLYMPIC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE BRIEFING

1. AMBASSADOR AND COMOFF WERE INVITED TO MARCH 30 MEETING, CHAIRED BY SOVIET OLYMPIC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN I. T. NOVIKOV, AT WHICH NOVIKOV GAVE ASSEMBLED (BUT SELECTED) MOSCOW CHIEFS OF MISSION AND OTHER DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES A FORTY-FIVE MINUTE EXPOSE OF PROGRAMS, PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS ON ROAD TO 1980 MOSCOW OLYMPIC GAMES.

2. MAIN POINTS MADE BY NOVIKOV WERE:

--SOVIET PEOPLE ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND SOVIET-HOSTED OLYMPICS.

--12,000 ATHLETES AND 3500 JUDGES WILL BE INVOLVED IN GAMES.

--ACCREDITED PRESS CORPS FOR OLYMPICS WILL NUMBER 7500 AND THERE WILL BE EIGHTEEN TV CHANNELS BROADCASTING DIRECTLY TO OUTSIDE WORLD.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 06332 311411Z

--1979 SPARTAKIAD (ALL-UNION SOVIET NATIONAL GAMES), WITH 2000 PARTICIPANTS, WILL SERVE AS USEFUL DRESS REHEARSAL FOR 1980.

--COMMERCIAL PROGRAM, SUCH AS SALE OF GOLD AND PLATINUM COMMEMORATIVE COINS AND RIGHTS TO USE MOSCOW OLYMPICS

LOGO, IS INTENDED TO OBTAIN FUNDS FOR "SELF-FINANCING" (SIC) OF TRAINING OF FUTURE OLYMPIC ATHLETES IN COUNTRY OF SALE AS WELL AS IN USSR.
--SOVIET PEOPLE ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND SOVIET-HOSTED OLYMPICS.

--300,000 TOURISTS, FOREIGN AND SOVIET, ARE EXPECTED IN MOSCOW FOR OLYMPICS. (PRESUMABLY THIS IS TOTAL FIGURE, WITH FLOW OF VISITORS HELD TO LESSER NUMBER AT ANY ONE TIME. NOVIKOV WAS NOT, HOWEVER, CLEAR ON THIS POINT.)

--ORGANIZING COMMITTEE IS AWARE THAT OLYMPIC VISITORS SPEND AVERAGE OF 25-30 PERCENT OF TIME AT GAMES, AND THAT ENTERTAINMENT AND DIVERSIONS FOR REMAINDER MUST BE FOUND (NOVIKOV CITED MUSEUMS, ART AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS, ETC., PROMPTING IRISH CHARGE TO COMMENT LATER THAT SHE DOUBTED HER COUNTRYMEN WOULD BE TOTALLY SATISFIED WITH SUCH A SELECTION OF ACTIVITIES).

--NUMBER OF BEDS AVAILABLE TO MOSCOW VISITORS, INCLUDING IMPROVED DORMITORY FACILITIES, WILL BE DOUBLED BY 1980 (N.B. CURRENT NUMBER OF MOSCOW HOTEL BEDS HAS BEEN CITED BY LOCAL PRESS AT 50,000, WITH ANOTHER 25,000 TO BE DERIVED FROM MAJOR NEW HOTEL PROJECTS, THUS LEAVING APPARENT ADDITIONAL 25,000 TO "DORMITORY"
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 06332 311411Z

FACILITIES).

--SOME CRITICISM AIMED AT BUILDERS OF CERTAIN OLYMPIC COMPLEXES WAS JUSTIFIED, BUT THINGS ARE NOW FALLING INTO LINE.

--SOVIET PEOPLE ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND SOVIET-HOSTED OLYMPICS.

3. NOVIKOV DISCOURSE WAS FOLLOWED BY BUS TOUR OF SEVERAL MOSCOW OLYMPIC FACILITIES. COMOFF REMAINED FOR THAT PORTION OF PROGRAM. BASIC IMAGE OBTAINED WAS THAT MANY OLYMPIAN TASKS REMAIN, DESPITE IMPRESSIVE PROGRESS TO DATE. REPORTS ON THESE AND OTHER ASPECTS OF PREPARATIONS FOR 1980 OLYMPICS WILL FOLLOW. TOON

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